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MAHATMA GANDHI AND KARL MARX

(A STUDY OF SELECTED SOCIAL
THINKERS)

R. P. SINHA

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Sociological Series No. 2

(A Study of Selected Social Thinkers)

MAHATMA GANDHI
&
KARL MARX

By :

R. P. Sinha, M. A.

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Opinion

“.....Presentation of any work in social thought or other sociological subjects, in a systematic, simple and understandable style, is extremely necessary as well as useful for an average student. There are many difficulties in performing such a task successfully, still every effort in this direction is commendable. In this light, I appreciate the hard work put in by Mr. R. P. Sinha. I hope that his work will be of considerable benefit to the students of Sociology.”

(From Sociological Series No. 1.)

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1. MAHATMA GANDHI

Chapter I

Life Sketch (1869–1948 A.D.)

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as 'Bapu'—the Father of Indian nation, was born on October 2, 1869, at Porbandar, India. He was enjoying the boyhood days of his fourteenth year when Karl Marx, after having attained his climax, had breathed his last. Gandhi, as a boy, was unconcerned with the world affairs though he was brought up in an anti-British atmosphere. Obviously, there was little in his early life to show that he was destined to become one of the most magnetic personalities and most compelling leaders of our country's long history.

Gandhi was married at 13 and at 19, when already a father, he went to London to study law. For three years he lived frugally in London on \$ 20 a month and then returned to India as a qualified barrister and a member of Inner Temple. He was, later in 1922, debarred from the membership of the Inner Temple on account of receiving a sentence of six years' imprisonment by the Indian courts. At the age of 23, he went to South Africa in a law case and stayed there for twenty years, seeking to improve the status of his fellow Indians, who were discriminated against because of their dark skins. There he developed his philosophy of non-violent civil disobedience as a means towards political ends.

He returned to India in 1914, gave away his property, and took to wearing a saintly dress of loin-cloth to symbolize his joining the repressed millions who could afford no more. He preached political and economic freedom from England and urged the wiping out of religious enmities among Hindus and Muslims. He launched a vigorous movement to attain political, economic, social and cultural freedom for India. He

made efforts to uplift the untouchables, declared by him as victims of a system called as 'rotten excrescence'. All these and many other services of Gandhi elevated his position to a great reverence in the minds of millions of his countrymen who called him 'the Mahatma' (great soul) or 'Bapu' (the father) and considered him as 'God' or 'Super Man'.

Gandhi was in and out of prison during most of his life due to his political, social and economic activities. He conducted many fasts and hunger strikes, using them as means of calling attention to a particular injustice. One of his fasts began on February 10, 1943 and ended after 21 days. It was in protest of his internment behind barbed wire in the palace of Agha Khan at Poona, where he was held by the British government after the outbreak of civil disobedience following rejection of Sir Stafford Cripps' plan for Indian independence. In the early days of the second world war, Gandhi refused to support Indian participation in the war on the side of Great Britain until the British would guarantee Indian independence at the close of the war.

Physically Gandhi was small, bald, and in later years almost toothless. On January 30, 1948, he was assassinated in Delhi shortly after having concluded a fast in protest against communal strife between Hindus and Muslims.

Whereas volumes after volumes have been devoted to the life history and valuable works of Mahatma Gandhi, we leave this aspect to the above extent and switch over to the influences which were at work in enabling him to make valuable contributions to social thought as a top-ranking thinker of his time.

Chapter II

Factors Influencing Gandhian Philosophy

Gandhian social philosophy is the out come of the influence of his fore-runners' thinking on him and also of political, socio-economic and religious conditions prevalent in India before and during his life time. These multifarious influences ranged from his parents and home to Ruskin and Tolstoy.

Influence of Fore-runners

The fore-runners of Gandhi, who conceived the idea of social thinking on the basis of traditional non-violence, derived the origin of their thought mainly from Hindu scriptures of Vedas and Upanishads. Manu, Lord Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mohammed the Muslim prophet, who were all advocates of 'Ahimsa', exercised considerable influence on the thinking of Mahatma Gandhi. Besides, the moral principles of Confucius and the metaphysical thinking originating in China, worked as basic foundation of his thinking. Gandhi appears to have been partly influenced by his fore-runners of the West, including Hegel, Marx and Engels. But he did not agree with either of them in toto. The contrast between the Gandhian dialectic and that of Karl Marx and Hegel is striking. Each of them has dealt with a different level of abstraction and by comparing them, the dynamic quality of Gandhian concept of Satyagraha is illuminated. Immense was the influence on Gandhi due to the impact of works of three writers namely Tolstoy, the Christian anarchist; Thoreau, the American writer who influenced him, during his stay in South Africa, by his experiments of philosophy of non-violence and civil disobedience; John Ruskin, who, by his unique work — 'Unto This Last', by his approach to a systematic political theory as well as by his views on industrialization, arrested Gandhi's attention.

Influence of Religious & Socio-Economic Factors

The influence of mother and conservative Hindu society, which his home strictly represented, was mainly responsible for Gandhi's ideas about the law of life, morality and faith in religion. He imbibed in his own personal life what he was taught at his home and in his religious environment. Here we are reminded of the vow which Gandhi had to take before his mother—the vow to lead a chaste and Stoic existence.

Gandhi was deeply influenced by the socio-economic conditions of Indian society and they along with political condition were, to a very great extent, responsible for the emergence of his valuable approaches to Satyagraha, Non-violence, Love Truth & God, Trusteeship, Socialism etc.

Nevertheless, when we say that Gandhi was influenced by the above factors, we never mean that all the ideas and concepts of his fore-runners were accepted and agreed upon in toto by him. As Gandhi was more a practical man than a theorist, any theoretical formulation of his own philosophy and its classification under any 'Ism' is not possible. "He was in one sense a conservative in another a philosophical anarchist; on one hand a socialist and on the other a capitalist; and yet again a primitive communist. His writings and speeches show some evidence for each of these assertions. He belongs to all these camps and to none of them"¹ Every 'Ism' in general and conservatism as well as anarchism in particular influenced Gandhi no doubt, but none had anything to do with his own concept unless it was modified by his two main techniques—the techniques of Satyagraha and Non-violence.

The practical approach to life as such and his own experiments were in turn advocated by Gandhi in his preachings of the gospel of renunciation (which may not mean other worldliness), voluntary poverty, dignity of labour, equality of religions, brotherhood of man, force of God etc. Any attempt to disturb the harmony of life by setting one class of the people against another, creating class-consciousness and hatred, teaching the cult of violence in place of love, used to distress

him deeply. He was adversely influenced by the Western civilization, so he advocated the supremacy of Indian civilization which, unlike that of West, was based on morality and belief in God. He was primarily a religious man. He has mentioned in his own words that "Most religious men I have met are politicians in disguise; I, however, wear the guise of a politician, am atleast a religious man. My bent is not political but religious."² This is from where Gandhi starts in his thinking and doing, whether in private or public life.

Chapter III

Analysis of Gandhian Social Thinking

While entering into the discussion of Gandhian social thinking, it is necessary to be aware of the fact that he did not propound any systematic theory as such. In strict sense of the term Mahatma Gandhi was not a theorist. Truly, he had little or no interest in academic analysis, nor he had time or patience for reducing his bulk of experiences into theoretical formulations.

The above fact is evidently supported in Gandhi's own reply to Jone V. Bandurant in regard to his approach to Satyagraha—"But Satyagraha is not a subject for research. You must experience it, use it, live by it."³

Gandhian thinking comprises of a comprehensive analysis of socio-economic and politico-religious problems from individualistic as well as socio-centric angles. There are certain fundamental principles on which Gandhian social thinking clusters, and Gandhi, like a practical idealist, holds rigidly to those principles.

(A) Concept of Social Order

It has been said that an ideal society is that in which every individual is able to live a life of progressively increasing wants with minimum output of labour. But Gandhi did not agree to this type of society. It appeared to him as fantastic as to expect 'a camel to pass through the eye of a needle.' In this connection Mahatma Gandhi advocates the principle of 'Plain Living and High Thinking.'⁴ He comments that high living means luxurious living which is an impossible proposition for any society as a whole. The 'law of life' according to Gandhi, is a condition under which a well-ordered society can be intelligible and the life worth living. This condition—the 'law of life' is taken as the law higher than that of destruc-

tion because, as Gandhi says, life persists in the midst of destruction. All well constructed societies are based on the law of non-violence and law of love, which are like two wheels on which life's charriot should move. Besides, Gandhian concept of ideal society needs universal application of moral law which demands sympathy and love for every human being, protection of poor by strong men and mutual obligation of services. One's duty in a society should be to do the right and leave the rest to God without thinking about the result of actions.

Sarvodaya Samaj :

The concept of ideal society is imbibed in Gandhi's call for 'Sarvodaya Samaj'. Sarvodaya, in Gandhian terminology, means 'the greatest good for all.' This ideal is better than the utilitarian ideal of the greatest good for the greatest number because suffering to some is inevitably involved in the latter. For 51 persons (representing majority), the interest of 49 (representing minority) is to be sacrificed. Hence Gandhi says 'the only ideal and dignified human doctrine is the greatest good of all and this could be achieved by uttermost sacrifice.' Gandhi's 'Sarvodaya' and 'common good' ideal of Green, both are ethical ideals for self-realization. But according to B. S. Sharma, Green's 'common good' is not something which one man or set of men can gain or enjoy to the exclusion of others, but it is spiritual activity in which all may partake and in which all must partake, if it is to amount to full realization of the faculties of the human soul. Thus Gandhi's use of word 'all' looks to be better than Green's term, 'common', because of the mis-interpretation to which the latter can be subject.⁵

Yet Gandhi remains silent on the future structure of society based on his ideal. He says : "When society is deliberately constructed in accordance with the law of non violence, its structure will be different in material particulars from what it is today. But I can not say in advance what the government, based wholly on non-violence, will be like."

The chief requirements of Gandhian 'Sarvodaya' are non-cooperation, non-violence and decentralization of power.

(B) Gandhian Dialectical Approach

The basic idea underlying Gandhian dialectic revolves around his emphasis on means rather than ends. Gandhian technique lays stress on purity of means. Obviously, therefore, while giving us an idea of his own concept of Socialism, Gandhi says, that Socialism is as pure as crystal and, therefore, it requires crystal like means to achieve it. 'Impure means result in impure ends. Hence the prince and the peasant will not be equalised by cutting off prince's head, nor the process of cutting off can equalise the employer and the employed. One cannot reach truthfulness by untruthfulness. Truthful conduct alone can reach truth.'⁶

Reasons for Gandhi's emphasis on purity of means have been summed up by Dr. Dhawan as under.⁷

1. We have power over means and not over ends.
2. End grows out of means.
3. According to personal experience of Gandhi, with perverted means only perverted ends are realised.
4. The other course i. e. impurity of means to attain ends or giving priority to ends themselves, deadens our finer sentiments.
5. It sometimes so happens that we regard means as ends and, in that case, if means are bad, the result will immediately be bad.
6. There is no certainty that the bad or violent means are initiated by good motives. All fascists speak of laudable ends.
7. It is dangerous ethics to make the end as the criterion.
8. Besides, who knows that the end is going to be ending. It may be short-lived one and passing away soon.

Corelating the theory of ends and means with concepts of Truth and Non-violence, A. Huxley has remarked that it tends to produce 'a state of greatest possible unification.' It does not at all mean that, for Gandhi, end is only a secondary thing. As a matter of fact, he attaches equal importance to both. Both are inseparable. For Gandhi, 'Truth' is end and 'Ahimsa' or non-violence is simply means. Therefore, for the sake of Truth, he is capable of sacrificing Ahimsa. Gandhi lays more emphasis on non-violence also because Truth is related with infinite while non-violence with finite.

(C) **Gandhian dialectic & Political theory**

As a matter of fact, Gandhi did not proceed from any specific political ideology. Yet the significance of political theory of his action in the practical field of politics, is inestimable. Two essential requisites have, here-to-fore, been taken into consideration for the formulation of political thought. First was the reflection upon the ends of political action, and the second was of means for achieving them. Traditional political thought, assuming a separation of ends from means, has proceeded to eclipse means by emphasising concern for ends. The dialectical approach of Gandhian technique of 'Satyagraha' serves as a possibility of reconciling ends and means through a philosophy of action. The success of Gandhian technique, however, depends considerably upon the manner in which the essential elements are applied and manifested during a given dynamic process of his dialectic—action of Satyagraha.⁸

(D) **Gandhian Approach to Politics and Religion**

The origin of Gandhian political philosophy can be traced from his religious background. He had not that narrow conception of religion which is held in popular mind particularly in West. It is his religion which forces Gandhi's entry into politics. The idea bears evidence from Gandhi's own remarks :

'I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind and that I could not do unless I took part in politics.'

With the above reproduction of Gandhian remarks, Dr. B. S. Sharma further evaluates the political philosophy by analysing the concept of non-violence, 'dharma' and its dynamic force and concept of Satyagraha. Acknowledging the supreme importance of individual, as emphasised by Gandhi, Dr. Sharma remarks, "The application of non-violent methods to politics is the unique contribution of Gandhi."⁹

For achieving political ends, Gandhi introduces the tools of Satyagraha backed by the elements of love and truth, non-violence, non-co-operation and civil disobedience.

(E) Religion co-related with Economics

According to Sam Hegginsbothan religion bereft of economics is unbelievable. "Religion to be worth of anything, must be capable of being reduced when necessary in terms of economics." Gandhi endorses these remarks of S. Hegginsbothan, yet he retains one significant mental reservation.

Gandhi's mental reservation, is that "Whereas religion to be worth anything must be capable of being reduced to the terms of economics, economics to be worth anything must also be capable of being reduced to the terms of religion or spirituality. Therefore, in the scheme of religion-cum-economics, there is no room for exploitation or Americanization, as it is technically known."¹⁰

According to Gandhian ideal, there is no room in true economics, which is convertible with religion, for the owning of slaves, may they consist of human beings, cattle or machinery. He further clarifies his stand by saying that application of laws of economics must vary with varying conditions.

(F) Gandhian Socialism

Gandhi's view of Socialism is reflected in one of his answers which he gave before his death :—

"Socialism is a beautiful word. So far as I am aware, in Socialism, the members of society are equal—none high none low. In the individual body the head is not high because it is the top of the body nor are the soles of the feet low because

they touch the earth. Even as parts of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. This is Socialism. In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee all are on the same level."

Thus Gandhi advocated complete eradication of all distinctions on grounds of caste, creed, social or economic status.

Gandhi's conviction was that only truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted socialists will be able to establish a socialistic society in India and the world. So he said, 'To my knowledge, there is no country in the world which is purely socialistic.'

Governing Factors :

Gandhi lays stress on truthful means for attaining truthful ends. With the dynamic forces, of Love, Truth, Non-violence and Spiritual Faith, whose reliability and validity is based on his own experiences and experiments in public and private life, Gandhi wanted to build a new, rather an ideal social order. This ideal of Socialism is kept by him in line with India's ancient cultural traditions. Things of the spirit counted far more than material possessions and worldly comforts. For this he advocated to his countrymen the supremacy of their own civilization and advised them to hold fast to it. Their civilization had stood the test of time and had sought to satisfy the highest aspiration of mankind. Gandhi obviously does not agree with the belief that 'every thing old is bad.' He believes that all old that promotes the human welfare may be good and the new which is dangerous to the human and social welfare may be bad. He accordingly, embraces the value of Truth, Spinning Wheel,¹¹ and 'old brown bread.'

Analysing the concept and significance of non-violence, Gandhi refers to the historical records about human origin and development. He tries to show man's progress towards non-violence. According to him, human nature has shown gradual decrease of 'Himsa' and constantly increasing attitude for

'Ahimsa' right from cannibalism to chase and hunt and then to agriculture stages. Gandhi thus endorsed the Christian philosophy of truth, harmony, brotherhood and justice and conceived all these as attributes of non-violence.

He observes that "Man as animal is violent, but as spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards 'Ahimsa' or rushes to his doom." He further says, 'If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards Ahimsa, it follows that it has to progress still further. Nothing in this world is static, everything is kinetic. If there is no progression, then there is inevitable retrogression. No one can remain without the eternal cycle, unless it be God himself.'

Doctrine of Satyagraha :

Gandhi related Satyagraha with Socialism and said that every worthy object can be achieved by the use of Satyagraha. 'Satyagraha is a force, which, if becomes universal, would revolutionise social ideals and do away with despotism and evergrowing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning and are almost being crushed to death and which fairly promises to overwhelm even the nations of the East.'¹² So Gandhi concludes that Socialism will not be reached by any other means. Satyagraha can relieve society from all evils—political, economic and moral.

Chief Characteristics :

In regard to the doctrine of Gandhian Satyagraha, the following points of explanation arrest our attention.

1. The doctrine of Satyagraha is merely an extension of the rule of domestic life to the political.

2. The law of Love, which silently but surely governs the family for the most part throughout the civilized world, is nothing but the law of Truth. On this basis Gandhi says, 'Satyagraha is a coin on whose face you read Love and on the reverse you read Truth. It is a coin current every where and has indefinite value.'

3. Satyagraha is self-dependent. It does not require the assent of the opponent before it can be brought into play. On the other hand, it shines most when the opponent resists. So it is irresistible.

4. Satyagraha is called the 'soul force' because a definite recognition of the soul within it is a necessity. A satyagrahi believes that death does not mean cessation of the struggle, but a culmination.

5. Satyagraha is twice-blessed. It blesses him who practises it and also him against whom it is practised. It never injures his opponent and always appeals either to his reason by gentle arguments or his heart by the sacrifice of the self.

6. Satyagraha can be practised by all. Once its simple principle of adherence to truth and insistence upon it by self-suffering is understood, anybody can practise it.

7. Satyagraha largely appears as civil disobedience or civil resistance.

Thus Gandhi evaluates his doctrine of Satyagraha and concludes with the remarks : 'In my opinion, the beauty and efficacy of Satyagraha is so great and the doctrine so simple that it can be preached even to children.'¹²

Socialism and Belief in God :

Gandhi has tremendous faith in God, and he conceives Socialism from that angle. In his opinion, 'God is a living force.....he who denies the existence of that great force, denies to himself the use of that inexhaustible power and thus remains impotent.....the socialism of such nature takes men nowhere, what to say of society in which they live.'

(G) Gandhian Concept of Class-Struggle

Gandhi does believe in the existence of class-struggle. What he does not believe is the necessity of fomenting and keeping it up. According to him, this can be avoided. The real conflict, he says, is between intelligence and unintelligence. He, therefore, considers it to be a folly to keep up such a con-

flict. 'Unintelligence must be removed', he stresses. 'When labour is intelligent enough to organise itself and learn to act as one man, it will have the same weight as money if not much greater.' Money has as much its use as labour. So equal consideration of money and labour does not affect the harmony.

Gandhian ideal regarding labour and capital is, therefore, based on his concept that capital and labour should supplement and help each other. They should cooperate with each other and, like the members of a family, maintain unity and harmony. Thus Gandhi aims at mending and not ending of the capitalist class.¹³ The idea of class-war does not appeal to him. He says, "In India a class-war is not only not inevitable, but it is avoidable if we have understood the message of non-violence."

So the problem, according to Gandhi, is not to set class against class but to educate labour to a sense of its dignity. Here emerges his concept of 'Dignity of Labour' and the concept of 'Non-Possession'. The moment labour is educated and recognises its own dignity, money will find its rightful place. i.e. it will be held in trust for labour, for labour is more than money, observes Gandhi. Gandhi's claim for avoiding class-war is based on two way planning—(1) by imposing conditions on non-violent methods (2) by inviting capitalists to regard them as trustees for those on whom they depend for the making, the retention and the increase of their capital.

(H) Gandhian Theory of Trusteeship

Gandhi, no doubt, wanted 'to end capitalism almost if not quite', as much as the most advanced socialists or even communists. But his methods, even the language of his theory, differ.

Gandhi is against capitalism but not against capitalists. He wanted capitalists to work as trustees for those who helped in the increase of capital. He wanted marriage between labour and capital and conceived capital to be labour's servant and not its master. He allows the privileged class or men of

intellect even to earn more but their greater earnings must be used for the good of the State. Just as the income of all earning sons of a father goes to the common family-fund, so also, these privileged men or classes should have their earnings as trustees. This was his objective of Trusteeship.

Gandhian Theory of Trusteeship, as such, therefore is that "Every thing belonged to 'Gopal' i. e. God, and was received from God. Therefore, it was for His people as a whole and not for a particular individual. When an individual had more than his proportionate portion, he became a trustee of that portion for God's people." The theory, thus, has the religious sanction behind it. No other theory is compatible with non-violence.

Gandhi further says that God, who was all powerful, had no need to store. He created from day-to-day; hence men also should, in theory, live from day-to-day and not stock things. If this truth is imbibed by people in general, it would become legalised and Trusteeship would become a legalised institution.

The Theory of Trusteeship maintains the mutuality of interests. 'It is not unilateral and does not, in the least, imply superiority of the trustee. It is perfectly a mutual affair and each—labour and capitalist—believes that his own interest is best safeguarded by safeguarding the interest of the other.'¹⁴

Features of Trusteeship :—

Gandhian formula of Trusteeship comprises of the following main features¹⁵ :—

1. Trusteeship provides a means of transforming the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one. It gives no quarter to capitalism, but gives the present owning class a chance of reforming itself. This feature is based on Gandhi's belief that human nature is never beyond redemption.

2. It does not recognise any right to private ownership of property, except in as much as, it may be permitted by the society for its own welfare,

3. It does not exclude legislative regulation of the sense of ownership of wealth.

4. Thus under state-regulated Trusteeship an individual will not be free to hold or use his wealth for selfish satisfaction or in disregard to the interests of society.

5. Similar to the proposal of fixation of a decent minimum living wage, a limit should be fixed for the maximum income that could be allowed to any person in society. The difference between such minimum and maximum incomes should be reasonable, equitable and also variable from time to time, so much so that the tendency would be towards obliteration of the difference.

5. The character of production should be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed.

Thus Gandi places the institution of kinship under his theory of Trusteeship of an ideal economic order.

Chapter IV

Critical Estimate of Gandhian Thought

According to Dr. B. S. Sharma, Gandhi's belief in truth and non-violence summarises the whole philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. 'Truth and Non-violence are the twin suns around which all the lesser planets of his life and thought revolve,' Dr. Sharma remarks.' 'The application of non-violent methods to Politics is the unique contribution of Gandhi.'

Gandhian Conception of Religion

Gandhi has not that narrow conception of religion which is held in popular mind, particularly in West. As a matter of fact, it is his religion that forces Gandhi's entry into politics. He stepped into the field of politics with religious motivations and this fact is supported by his own remarks, 'I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with whole of mankind and that I could not do unless I took part in Politics.'

Analysing the concept of religion or 'Dharma' as visualised by Gandhi, Dr. Sharma says, 'Dharma for Gandhi is a very wide term and includes all ethics plus something more. It is not a static but dynamic thing'. Gandhi agrees with Dr. S. Radhakrishnan who says that Dharma is not a fixed code of mechanical rules, but a living spirit which grows and moves in response to the development of society. It is relative to time, place, circumstances, sex, age, temperament, vocation etc. Satisfaction or conviction to conscience or 'Atma' should be attained with the help of Vedas, Smritis and 'Sadachar' particularly by those who possess weak mind and are vacillating and indecisive by nature.

Gandhi, therefore, gives supreme importance to individual conscience but then he also prescribes intensive ethical training and discipline according to the laws of Dharma

before one is qualified to pass judgment on their validity. Dharma is every thing that binds individual from all sides in every walk of life.

Some critics, however, feel an overtone of religious element in Gandhian philosophy. To them Gandhi appears more to be a 'religious preacher' or a saint than a social thinker.

Dr. G. N. Dhawan, in course of his elaborate analysis of Gandhian philosophy says "In the realm of political thought it is easier to say what Gandhi was than what he was not. In one way he was a conservative, an anarchist, a socialist, a liberal, an economist and a politician, while, in the other, he was none of the above.' By this we simply mean that Gandhian ideology could fit in any of the above theories but only when his own techniques of Truth, Non-violence and Satyagraha along with the concept of spiritual force are accommodated in them. He is prepared to embrace the concept of Marxian socialism, conservatism, anarchism or even communism but only with due modifications effected by his tools of Non-violence, belief in God, and technique of Satyagraha.

Therefore, to the scholar, seeking internally systematised bodies of thought, the study of Gandhi's philosophy is simply elusive and unrewarding. The most serious efforts to classify Gandhi in terms of any school of political theory have failed. Still in Gandhian development of thought lies a contribution of great significance for political philosophy. The unique contribution of Gandhi in the realm of political philosophy clusters around the role which 'Satyagraha', as a technique of action together with philosophy of conflict lying behind it, may play in social and political systems based upon them.

Gandhi's emphasis on individual's freedom and his potentialities comes quite close to L. T. Hobhouse's and Green's concept of 'positive freedom' and the realisation of the individual's fullest potentialities is possible only within the social structure. The idea of collective well-being or the common good as underlying any claim to private right is again conge-

nial. Like Green, Gandhi had no part to glorify the estate. For both of them the aim is to make life morally meaningful for all people.

Gandhian thinking coincides with that of Green when he emphasises that means should be as pure as ends themselves. As the means, so the end, is the formula of Gandhi. For him, means are the seed while end is the tree and, therefore, as is the seed, so is the tree.

Neither Traditionalist Nor Orthodox

Gandhi was neither a traditionalist nor an orthodox. His ethical principles superseded traditionalism. He did not agree with the belief that 'every thing that is written in Sanskrit or printed in 'Shastras' has any binding effect on individual. All that is old may not necessarily be good to man and his welfare. Gandhi's attitude towards capital and labour was consistent with his views on 'Jamindari' and Trusteeship. Here too, he discarded the traditional ideas for the sake of human and social welfare holding that 'capital and labour should act as trustees and should work in the interest of consumers.' He treated capital as "labour's servant and not its master."

Both Gandhi and Ruskin sought conversion of the upper class. Ruskin appealed for the change of heart and transformation through justice as paramount. But he could not consider the masses of men as ends in themselves. Instead, he treated them as means to the end of others. Gandhi conceded the possible result that voluntary transformation might fail. He, unlike Ruskin, recognised the power of common man and placed before him the means whereby he could be assured of the 'justice' about which Ruskin could only speculate. Gandhi believed in the worth of the individual man and considered his welfare as the ultimate social goal. The distinction of Gandhian approach is, therefore, the provision of means to achieve that end and a technique of direct action.

In Gandhi's approach to established institutions and traditional approaches, especially with reference to religion and property, unorthodoxy has emerged as the predominant characteristic. Gandhi used traditional precepts but sought to change established institutions to make them subservient to the needs of the members of the society to the common good as defined in terms of individual welfare. He urged abandoning of a custom when it proved detrimental to the social welfare.

Gandhi and Conservatism

Conservatism has been said to be 'an attitude towards political institutions and philosophy of social relationships, which include—(a) a respect for religious institutions, especially those concerned with religion and property ; (b) strong sense of continuity in the historical changes of the social system ; (c) belief in the relative impotence of individual will and reason to deflect social change from its course, and (d) a keen moral satisfaction in the loyalty that attaches the members of a society to their stations in its various ranks.'¹⁶

Gandhi, no doubt, agreed with the views of conservatives so far as they treated society as an organism in which each member had its own part to do, no one being smaller or bigger than the other. He believed in identical independence. Yet, he did not believe in organic growth of society. By equality, he did not mean the determined place of individual in social structure. He disregarded the conservative ideas about the qualities of leadership.

Gandhi, in course of his biological analogy, decries 'distorted notions of superiority and inferiority.' Gandhi also values individual freedom but he, side by side, also keeps in mind that man is essentially a social being. This fact keeps Gandhian ideas in accord with the new 'liberalism' of T. H. Green and parts with metaphysical theory of Hegel. Gandhi says, 'Man has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress'. 'Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle.

We have to learn to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint', is his opinion.

As Dr. Dhawan points out, Gandhi cannot be taken as conservative thinker also because of the fact that his civil disobedience policy was distinguished more clearly by moral aspect than by political obligations, whereas the preceding concept of civil disobedience had political obligation as the main distinction. Gandhi, no doubt, used traditional precepts in regard to society and social order, yet he sought to change established institutions to make them subservient to the needs of the members of society—to the common good defined in terms of individual welfare.

According to Gandhi "We must gladly give up custom that is against reason, justice and religion of the heart." He said that 'Bad custom should be discarded as the 'ill-gotten hoard of a miser'.

Qualities of Leadership

Gandhi also does not agree with the conservatism so far as its selective nature of leadership is concerned. His criteria of leaders lay less in birth or station than in personal qualities. 'Courage, endurance, fearlessness and, above all, self-sacrifice are the qualities required for our leaders,' he wrote. Conservatives' distrust of the masses was also not favoured by him. Had Gandhi not taken experiments with truth, he would have possibly remained a conservative.

Gandhi and Anarchism

Dr. G. N. Dhawan has asserted that Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist. He reminds us that Gandhi strove for 'the greatest good of all' and held that this end could be realised 'only in the classless and stateless democracy of autonomous village communities based on non-violence instead of coercion, on service instead of exploitation, on renunciation instead of acquisitiveness and on the largest measure of local and individual initiative instead of centralization.'

Dr. Dhawan has further pointed out that Gandhi condoned a degree of state organisation only because he believed that anarchial society was ideal but unattainable.

Criticising the above views of Dr. Dhawan, asserted in one of the few analytical works on Gandhian Political Thought, Joan V. Bondurant, says that while showing the anarchist trend in Gandhian thought, Dhawan overlooks the key to 'Gandhian anarchism' and fails to formulate the significance of the Gandhian modifications that work upon a familiar political approach. Dhawan, according to Bondurant, errs firstly in not recognising the relative unimportance of end-structure of Gandhian approach to the state; secondly, he errs when he suggests that "Gandhi's democracy would be..... based on non-violence instead of coercion....." Bondurant raised this criticism of Dr. Dhawan's remarks on the basis that, according to her, an element of coercion is retained and is distinguished by character of non-violence in Gandhian ideal.

Perfect 'Ahimsa' is Rare

As Dr. B. S. Sharma has mentioned, Non-violence or 'Ahimsa' of Gandhi is not a word of literal interpretation. It means 'avoiding of injury to any one through thought, words or deeds, with anger or an intention of causing pain.'

G. B. Shaw has, according to Dr. Sharma, wrongly criticised the Gandhian Non-violence by characterising it as merely a negative aspect of his (Gandhi's) philosophy. Dr. Sharma says that Non-violence for Gandhi is not only a negative aspect but also a positive one because it involves love etc. To Gandhi it is a positive and dynamic force. In its active form, it has goodwill towards all, even for the evil doers. It is not, however, submission to the evil doer but "putting one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant."

Gandhi is, however, conscious that the state of perfect 'Ahimsa' is a rare thing and comes when spirit, mind and body are in complete accord. Moreover, it is rare because some 'Himsa' or violence is involved in life itself.

Three Levels of Ahimsa

Gandhi distinguishes between three levels of 'Ahimsa' in the following manner.

- (1) 'Ahimsa' of the brave, who adopts non-violent methods with conviction.
- (2) 'Ahimsa' as a measure of expediency.
- (3) 'Ahimsa' of coward and effeminate.

Gandhi prefers the first level of 'Ahimsa' and is ready to prefer even violence to the third level i. e. 'Ahimsa' of cowards. He says that non-violence, being superior to violence, requires higher type of courage and inner strength. Sometimes people think that violence is necessary for crushing down the evil. But, according to Gandhi, it is so because non-violence, being natural, is not noted while violence, being un-natural, is noted openly and laudably.

Sir Aurther Moore regards non-violence as mental violence, a method of fighting which is open to unarmed people. C. M. Case differentiates between persuasive suffering and coercive suffering and calls Gandhian Satyagraha as coercive suffering. Gandhi accepts Case's differentiation between persuasive and coercive categories but he is not ready to put Satyagraha in coercive category. He shows the difference between passive resistance of the West (boycotts and strikes) and his own satyagraha. In other words, Gandhi means to say that whereas in the West physical violence is avoided on the ground of expediency, in his system the same is avoided on moral considerations.

Gandhi's Disagreement with Communism

Gandhi believed in non-violent communism. In his opinion, communism of Russian type, which 'is imposed on a people, would be repugnant to India. He said, 'If communism came without any violence, it would be welcome because, in that case, no property would be held by any body except on behalf of the people and for the people. A millionaire may have his millions but he will hold them for the people. The State could take charge of them whenever it would need them for the common cause.'

He does not agree with the views of utilitarians, who justify the use of violence or force even in an ideal state, at

least to prevent a greater evil. Gandhi, as an idealist, always prefers persuasion instead of the use of force. Force does not play any part in his ideal.

Gandhi as Practical Idealist

We have to remember that Gandhi was an idealist as well as a practical man. So, as a practical man, he accepted that the use of force or violence does play its role in actual conditions of life. Its existence in actual conditions of life, according to Gandhi, cannot be rooted out because, he says, 'ideal ceases to be an ideal when it is realised.' This means that Gandhi as an idealist does not recommend the use of violence but, as a realist, he does realise its necessity in practical politics and refers it as 'unavoidable or inevitable because of human imperfections.'

Dr. Dhawan in his book on Gandhian Political Philosophy, has characterised Gandhi as a 'practical idealist.' He says that Gandhi was not a dreamer or visionary but visualised human nature in the background of the metaphysical and moral conditions. Gandhi saw not only the physical aspects of his personality but also his true self, the inner self. He touched not only good side of man's nature but bad also. To speak in the words of Gandhi, 'There is no one without faults, not even men of God. They are men of God not because they are faultless but because they know their own faults.....and are even ready to correct themselves.'

With this psychological background, Gandhi places more reliance and emphasis on individuals than on group from moral point of view. He does not consider man to be merely a brute but emphasises that human soul has got immense potentialities for rising, and man, by nature, has got capacity for highest possible development. Gandhi is, however, conscious that a very hard labour is needed for acquiring complete mastery over body and the ethical discipline of life. He says, 'If for mastering the physical sciences you devote a whole life time, how many lives may be needed for mastering the greatest spiritual force that mankind has known !' The ethical discipline-

of Gandhi does not involve any element of suppression, but on contrary, involves essentially a process of sublimation. Gandhian ideal is to attain 'perfectibility' and not 'perfection' because, Gandhi says that 'perfection' can be achieved only when the body is dissolved.

Tagore criticised this ideal of life, advocated by Gandhi, and characterised living with such ideal as 'dull, negative, incomplete, unsound and against arts of life.' However, according to Dr. Dhawan, Gandhi's ideal is neither psychologically unsound nor practically infirm-like.

Difference between Nehru and Gandhi

A significant distinction between the concept of Gandhian Socialism and that of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, may be mentioned here briefly. Gandhi had clarified his stand in his reply to a question in this regard, published in 'Harijan' of Feb. 13, 1937. The difference between the views of the two was that of emphasis on means. Pt. Nehru's emphasis was on results while Gandhi emphasised on means. Although Pt. Nehru believed on non-violence, he would like 'to have Socialism by other means if it was impossible to have it by non-violence.' Gandhi, on the other hand, emphasised only on non-violence on the basis of principle. Even if he was assured that he could have independence by means of violence, he 'would refuse to have it' because, for him, 'it won't be real independence.' Pt. Nehru, thus, did not favour Gandhi in putting an over-emphasis on non-violence.

Apart from this, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, who appears to rely more on intellect than character of human beings, further criticised Gandhi saying that latter neglects intellect before character. But, as a matter of fact, Gandhi does not do so. He gives due cognizance to character as well as intellect. He simply gives secondary importance to intellect.

Concept of Non-violent State

As a 'practical idealist,' Gandhi feels that the use of force is inevitable in actual life because, he says, life's very

existence involves violence. However, Gandhi, always and every where, advocates non-violence.

Accordingly, Gandhi does not approve of the authoritarian state because 'actual state is a process in which use of force is inevitable. For him, state is a violence in concentrated and organised form. It is a negation of non-violence and hence it can not attain his ideal of non-violence.

The purpose of state, according to Gandhi, is to establish conditions under which man may realise, to the fullest, his potential, and the state should secure obedience from its members in return. When the state fails to achieve this objective, the individual must challenge its authority. This challenge should be in the order of disobedience of the state-authority and should be based on the action-technique of Satyagraha.

The structure of non-violent ideal state, as visualised by Gandhi, comprises of three aspects—(a) stateless democracy, (b) federation of satyagrahi-village-communities, (c) non-existence (in perfect society) of heavy transport, courts, lawyers, medicines etc. and, (d) need for happy adjustment of individual freedom and social restraint. Gandhi, however, does not conceive the society of Golden Age but he does believe in the possibility of free and dominantly non-violent society.

Gandhian Working Plan

With this structure of his ideal state in mind, Gandhi, in course of his entire preachings and actions, focusses his concentration on the following aspects :—

1. Working against the theory of absolute sovereignty.
2. Value of manual labour.
3. Striving for the 'greatest good of all.'
4. Reduced functions of the state.
5. Use of coercion to be exercised only in crimes.
6. Jails to be converted into reformatories.
7. The system of Police force to be transformed so that it could function like friend of the people.

8. Judicial works to be done mostly by Panchayats.
9. Economic conditions to be equalised for securing social justice.
10. Right of co-partnership and practical approach to theory of Trusteeship.
11. Change in revenue system.
12. Abolition of revenue from drinks and drugs.
13. Wage conditions of labour.
14. Promotion of basic education.
15. Emphasis on duty more than on right.
16. No exclusive nationalisation.
17. Strengthening the internal organisation.

Unsound Responses to Gandhian Thinking

Joan V. Bondurant, in her book, 'Conquest of Violence' has defined the basic precepts of Satyagraha—Truth, Non-violence, and 'Tapasya' (self-suffering). She has given a unique assessment of Gandhi's impact upon traditional Hinduism and has elaborately examined his political ideas. She has examined the applicability of his methods used in India in other contexts and in other countries and has, consequently, evaluated the Gandhian philosophy of action, which underlies his technique of Satyagraha. She observes that Satyagraha has far-reaching implications for social and political theory. It does provide constructive and creative means of resolving many kinds of conflict.

In the 'Preface' of her book, Bondurant remarks, 'It is not necessary to subscribe either to the ascetism, so characteristic of Gandhi, nor to his religious notions in order to understand and to value the central contribution of his technique of non-violent action. The name, Gandhi, and the word 'Gandhism' frequently touch off startling emotional responses. The reservoir of reverence for Gandhi in India is readily understandable. In the West, the response is often of a different order. For, the non-Indian is likely either to accord Gandhi the respect due to a saint and thereby to dismiss his significance in the mundane realm of practical politics, or

worried by what appears to him to be a diffused spirituality, to impute to Gandhi obscurantism and thereby to deny the pertinence of his contribution.'

She further says, 'Again fearing that Gandhian notions of political economy necessarily issue in primitive agrarianism, the Westerner tends summarily to reject Gandhi's import as unmeaningful in the current circumstance.'

She finally commends Gandhian philosophy of action and deprecates such responses saying that 'Such responses tend to emerge from the Gandhian experience and to obstruct an understanding of Gandhi's total impact. Even more important, these attitudes serve as a barrier to further exploration of the potentialities of the technique which Gandhi introduced.'

Compromise between Ends & Means

The challenge of Gandhian 'Satyagraha', according to Bondurant, centers upon the necessity of reconciling ends and means through a philosophy of action. The success of Gandhian technique, she says, depends considerably upon the manner in which the essential elements are applied and manipulated during the course of a given Satyagraha action. The integral part of Gandhian Satyagraha, according to her, is necessarily 'a philosophy of conflict.'

In regard to 'Satyagraha' and the relative scope of compromise, advocated by Gandhi, some critics do not agree with the readiness of Gandhi for compromise. But Gandhi holds that readiness for compromise is an essential part of 'Satyagraha'. Eagerness for compromise should not, however, mar the very mode of the Satyagraha. When, and if, the appeal to reason fails, one should appeal to heart by suffering which Gandhi calls great 'Tapasya'. According to him, it influences unconsciously, like Homoeopathic medicine, long but sure.

Means of Self-purification

Fasting, according to Gandhi, is means of self-purification and also of resisting evil. It can only be resorted to by in-

dividuals or groups but not by masses. Mr. George Arundale has criticised this view of Gandhi and has called fasting as a sort of terrorism. He says that the action of an opponent has no alternative between surrender and the fasting "individual's suicide", hence it is sort of terrorism. On the occasion of Yavada fast of Gandhi, Tagore described it as 'the ultimatum of mortification to God for his scheme of things.'

Final Evaluation

Finally we may agree with Dr. Dhawan's remarks that Gandhi's philosophy deserves consideration on so many grounds. Firstly it is in accordance with the needs of time. Secondly, it is 'the most original contribution of Gandhi to the modern political theory.'

Emerson has said that there are three kinds of great men—knower, thinker and doer. Gandhi combines all the three in his personality. He is practical as well as idealistic.

2. KARL MARX

Chapter I

Life Sketch (1818-1883 A.D.)

Karl Marx, the originator of modern Socialist movement, was born of Jewish parents at Treves, Germany, on May 5, 1818. His father, who was a lawyer and had become a Christian, was deeply interested in philosophy and history. He encouraged Marx to prepare for the career of a university teacher. But Marx, after completing his education in the universities of Bonn and Berlin, entered the profession of journalism because he soon found that his radical views made him unacceptable in the educational field in Germany of his day. Even then his radical views were so strenuously opposed by the government that he left the country and went to Paris in 1843.

In Paris Marx was influenced by French Socialism and its leader Proudhon. In 1845 he was expelled from Paris and went to Brussels and developed deep acquaintance with another German Socialist, Friedrich Engels. With Engels he was associated for the rest of his life.

In 1848 Marx and Engels issued a joint Manifesto of Communism which became the creed and programme of Socialist revolutionaries. The liberal revolution of 1848 made it possible for Marx to return to Germany for a short time. He established a paper in which Engels served as editor. But with the revival of reactionary political conditions he was exiled again in 1849. Thereafter, he became a correspondent of a paper in London and lived there up to the end of his life. It was during these later years that he did much of his writings. He died in London on March 14, 1883.

The teachings of Karl Marx served as the basis for the economic and political revolution in Russia in 1917. They

were duly embraced by Nicolai Lenin which resulted in the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In 1867, 1885 and 1895 appeared the three volumes of 'Das Kapital' in chronological order and brought world-wide fame to Karl Marx. In these volumes he used his unique and elaborate historical method and laborious style in analysing the social evolution.

Chapter II

Factors Influencing Marxian Thinking

Hegalian Philosophy

Karl Marx was originally influenced by Hegel, who was entirely an intellectual and was merely concerned with theoretical or the non-empirical study of developments in history. Indeed, Marx owes to Hegalian philosophy wherein dialectical system of logic describes inherent natural process. He can be taken even to be the direct descendant of Hegel. But apart from the non-empirical influence of Hegel, Marx developed his own practical thinking on concrete facts of life. His movement from France to Germany and later to England enabled him to study the societies of several countries. By dint of his empirical work, he modified the influence of Hegalian intellectual approach in the realms of historical processes, involving socio-economic and political conditions.

Marxian philosophy sidetracks Hegalian philosophical system when his empirical approach projects beyond the realm of logic. Nevertheless, Marx retains, though partially, the dynamic quality of the dialectical process. Both Hegel and Karl Marx, took the human development in their analysis as a single process. According to Hegel, each stage was visualised as higher to the previous one and, therefore, a link between the various stages was observed by him. Marx, on the other hand, visualised that each stage was the outcome of the previous stage but was contradictory to it in nature. This was the main distinguishing factor between the thinking of the two.

Process of Alienation

The concept of 'Alienation', laid down by Hegel, was also adopted by Karl Marx and was explained by him in his analysis of the productive units. The workers, in the capitalistic system, do the labour but that labour is transferred to the other class i. e. employers. The transfer of work and labour to the employers gives rise to the transfer of power and

authority. This process of giving power to the other group (employers), was conceived as the process of 'Alienation' by Marx.

Influence of Other Factors

The other factors responsible for exercising the influence on the social thinking of Marx may be summed up in brief as under :—

1. His own radical nature was at the root which always worked as incentive for seeking a solution to the socio-economic problems that had emerged out of the conflict between the class of property-holders and property-less section of the European society. With the development of the idea of wealth and technology in industrial sphere, this conflict was transformed as 'old wine in new bottle' and prevailed deep-rootedly between the capitalist class and the industrial workers class—Bourgeoise and Proletariat.

2. The personal knowledge about socio-economic and political conditions of various societies helped Marx, to a great extent, in visualising the social bond of men in relation to society and in propounding the theory of 'economic determinism,' aimed at the greatest good for all in the socialistic pattern of society.

3. Equally significant was the influence of historicism and empirical study which worked as the basis for Marxian dialectical method.

4. The Marxian description of historical evolution of society was also greatly influenced by his approach as a 'participant observer' and leader of the Socialist movement. Marx described the society as he saw it. He was participant observer in the sense that he participated in the plans for the organisation of all labourers for their common good.¹⁷

All these factors, influencing the social thinking of Marx, ultimately enabled him to arrive at a solution of the entire problem and that solution was Socialism.

Chapter III

Analysis of Marxian Social Thinking

In the present analysis of Marxian social thinking, the dogmas of Socialism advocated by Karl Marx, and his economic theories have got nothing to do. For estimating Marx as a social thinker, we have to consider only their sociological generalisations.

The essence of the theory of Karl Marx is given in his 'Critique of Political Economy' published in 1859. Its translation has been done by Stone in his work 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.'

(A) Society and Social Consciousness

According to Marx, society refers to individuals in their inter-relations. The most important of inter-actions, which take place in their relationships, are those which are concerned with material production.

In the words of Stone, who translated 'Das Capital', the original work of Marx, we find that when men carry on, in the social production, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will. These relations of production correspond to a definite state of development of their material power of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which all legal and political super-structures rise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual process of life. It is not the consciousness of the men that determines their existence but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.¹⁸

(B) Theory of Economic Determinism

In course of his analysis of social evolution in historical perspective, Marx designates the Asiatic, the ancient, the

feudal and the modern Bourgeoisie methods of production as various epochs in the progress of economic formation of society. The Bourgeoisie relationship of production is the antagonistic form of social process of production. Such antagonism arises from the conditions surrounding the life of individuals in society. Productive forces, at the same time, developing in the womb of Bourgeoisie society, create the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism.

The social formation constitutes, therefore, the closing chapter of the pre-historic stage of human society. This theory added by Marxian approach to class-struggle covers all essential features of Marxian economic interpretation of history.

Social Level of the Theory

In other words we may say that Marxian economic determinism by nature, is not individualistic but social. It depends upon social phenomena. It is constituted of an unbroken chain of deterministic system meaning thereby that the compulsive discipline in one system is a development from the similarly compulsive conditions of the preceding system. So, we can safely say that the determinism of Marxian theory is essentially on a social level. It is the social situation that dictates a given course of action.

(C) Production as Lever of Social Change

According to Marx, Production works as a lever of social change.¹⁹

Economic factor has been taken as the basis of human development by Marx but he has nowhere in his works defined this economic factor i. e. 'productive unit'. Yet by this term 'productive unit' he meant the economic unit based on productive forces. The concept of productive forces gave rise to the existing classes. The concept of class has been visualised by Marx from the productive forces working in a productive unit and serves as the basic foundation of social system.

Due to the forces of production, different classes emerge and a conflict in their power, on the basis of division of labour arises. Here emerges the conflict of interests among the classes.

In this development, instruments of capital show a tendency to assimilate in a decreasing number of hands, whereas the number of property-less, the so called 'Proletariat' class, ever increases.

(D) Role of Capitalistic Class

It has been discussed above as to how the capitalistic class comes into existence. Let us here consider the way it exercises a magnetic influence in controlling the capital and also the effects of the growth of this tendency in a capitalistic society.

1. In course of time the capitalist class acquires increasing industrial, political and social powers.

2. As the capitalist class causes increase in the number of Proletariats, this tendency, together with the increase in population, creates super-abundance of labour.

3. This in turn creates competitive tendency amongs workers in commercial market. It means that the labourers are compelled to enter into competition among themselves and sell their labour to the highest bidder in the market.

4. Capitalism thus forces the wages to a mere subsistence level, with the result that misery and suffering of the Proletariats are exceedingly increased. There comes a stage wherein superabundance of labour and competitiveness amongs labour class renders the employment possible only to those labourers who sell their labour for the least wages. This wage level is just equal to or even less than subsistence level of wages.

5. In this way the capitalist class through its tool of the 'Iron law of wages'²⁰ on one hand, crushes the worker, and on the other hand, concentrates in appropriating to itself an increasing amount of earnings of labour class. This appropriated amount has been called by Marx as the 'Surplus Value'.

6. The capitalist class by virtue of its might and shrewdness increases this 'Surplus Value' in course of various methods of exploitation of labour class for taking possession of as large a proportion of the earnings of labour as can be possible.

This brings us to the stage where the elements of class-struggle and class-consciousness deserve our attention.

Class-struggle and Class-consciousness

The conflict of interests among the two classes, capitalist and labour, lies at the core of the emergence and growth of class-consciousness which in turn is followed by struggle between these two classes. According to Marx, the employer's class gives rise to another class, employees, for its own existence and development. For their own functioning the employers create the employees' class and, in course of time, this class takes conflicting position and threatens destruction of the employers class.

In other words, at a certain stage of historical development the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, with the property relations, within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of forces of production, these relations turn into their fetters.²¹

In course of his impartial evaluation of Marxian theory, Prof. Bogardus has analysed Marxian concept of 'Class-consciousness.' He explains that the growth of capitalism causes a class-consciousness to develop among the members of Proletariat class. Consequently, labour organisations are formed and, in course of time, they acquire vast power. This gradual strength acquired by Proletariat class, through their labour organisations, results in the struggle between them and the capitalist class.

Here Marx, with an optimistic attitude, goes ahead to observe that 'By force of numbers, the Proletariat class is bound finally to win and to overthrow the capitalist class which is now in power; it will seize the means of production and manage them for the good of all.'²²

While analysing the Marxian theory of class-struggle, we are reminded of the contents of Communist Manifesto wherein it has been stressed that the history of all hitherto

existing societies is the history of class struggle. "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild master and journeyman, oppressor and oppressed, were in constant opposition to each other and carried on, some times open some times hidden fight, which ended either in a revolutionary reconstruction of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes.....The modern Bourgeoise society..... has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones..... Society, as a whole, is splitting up more and more into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—Bourgeoise and Proletariat."²³

(E) Plan of Marxian Socialism

Ultimately while attacking the problem of his times, with the sole weapon of Socialistic movement, Karl Marx suggests the latter as a solution and advocates the following measures²⁴ to be adopted when Proletariat government starts functioning :-

1. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.
2. Abolition of property in form of lands; rent to be used for public purposes.
3. Progressive income-tax.
4. Nationalisation of means of transport and commerce.
5. Extension of productive enterprises by the State.
6. Compulsory labour.
7. Free education and child labour.
8. Elimination of distrust between town and country.

Thus Marxian socialism includes all people. It leads to equal distribution of wealth, meaning thereby, that the earnings from the industry shall be distributed to the workers in proportion to their achievements. It also holds that a class conflict is inevitable and that workers must overthrow capitalists together with the government which they control, forming their own government to serve as their trustee.

Chapter IV

Critical Estimate of Marxian Social Thinking

The Following points deserve our attention for critically examining the social thinking of Karl Marx:—

1. The Marxian concept of Socialism does not put any emphasis on means. The first and the last effort of Marx is concentrated towards the end.

2. The use of violence is not discarded. On the contrary, it is advocated as a means to attain the goal.

3. The capitalist class is aimed to be ended and not mended.

4. The centralisation of power and authority is concentrated at the top i. e. State, controlled by Proletariats.

5. The Marxian theory can be explained from the point of view of social determinism rather than economic determinism. The entire doctrine of Karl Marx, though explained by him on the basis of economics, is indeed, social in nature because Marx takes the society and the social conflict into his entire analysis. This unquestionably enables us to classify him as a sociological thinker with no less success.

(6) *Views of Prof. Bogardus :*

According to Prof. Bogardus, who appears to have analysed Marxian thinking quite impartially, the name of Karl Marx is supreme on the list of socialists. However, Bogardus is of the opinion that Marx was, on one hand optimistic about the success of Proletariat class in seizing the means of production and managing them 'for the good of all' but, on the other hand, he did not outline a utopia. Besides, Marx described the historical evolution of society only as he saw it as a participant observer and leader of Socialist movement.

7. Some of the ardent followers of Karl Marx and even some of the prominent academic writers have characterised him as '*deus exmachina*' and proclaimed him to be the 'Galileo' or the 'Darwin' of the Social Sciences.

(8) *Sorokin's Criticism :*

An admirer of Karl Marx will, however, be somewhat confronted to face the bitter criticism made by Prof, Sorokin.

Prof. Sorokin observes that, firstly, from a purely scientific point of view, as far as its sound elements are concerned, there is nothing in Marxian theory that was not laid by earlier authors, secondly, what is really original, is far from being scientific, and thirdly, though the theory deserves the merit of generalising the ideas given before the time of Marx in a somewhat stronger way, the general formulas are expressed in an obscure and ambiguous form and they are not so much the results of any inductive or factual study as of speculative and dogmatic deduction.

Nevertheless, Prof. Sorokin's criticism of Marxian social thinking appears to be impregnated with prejudiced and unsound ideas.

KARL MARX AND MAX WEBER²⁵

According to Dr. T. Parsons, bureaucracy plays the same role for Max Weber as class-struggle played for Karl Marx. Both these concepts—the concept of bureaucracy and the concept of class-struggle—are conceived by Max Weber as 'ideal types' but both, at the same time, are concrete phenomena, actually existing in the society and studied by the society.

Max Weber's 'spirit of capitalism' is based on three main characteristics—(a) conspicuous traits, (b) consequential traits, and (c) additional traits. These traits emerge out of the Max Weber's theory of actions in relation to society. In course of his analysis of capitalism, he points out that the capitalistic society flourishes better if it accepts bureaucratic system. However, no co-relation or causal connection exists between them.

The Marxian analysis of capitalism is based on purely economic conditions and factors of production.

Similarity of Approach :

A comparative study of the phenomenon of capitalism reveals a close agreement between the approaches of Karl Marx and Max Weber. This agreement lays emphasis on compulsive aspect of the capitalistic system. According to Max Weber, individual's course of action, within such a system, is determined in the first instance by the character of situation in which the individual is placed. But according to Karl Marx such a situation is determined in terms of 'conditions of production.' Once such a system develops in society, it becomes self-sustaining by virtue of its compulsive power over individuals.

Points of Difference :

There is also a marked difference between the approaches of Marx and Weber in relation to their study of capitalism.

1. Karl Max, as a matter of fact, tried to draw specific laws on the basis of which such a system, i. e. capitalism, would lead to self destruction, whereas Max Weber did not refer to any such self-destructive process of capitalistic system anywhere.

2. Max Weber explained the 'spirit of capitalism' in terms of a system of ultimate values and value-attitudes, whereas Karl Marx explained the system entirely on basically economic understanding and determined the value system by economic system of production.

The historical researches of Max Weber were concerned mainly with the present. He studied the conditions of his own country, Germany, as well as of other countries like Russia and America. His study was focussed at the expanded version of Marxist theory. Weber's conclusive opinion was that it was only the West where the phenomena of Capitalism along with highly specialized bureaucracy, comprised of technical experts and jurists, was found. Weber, it may be pointed out, had studied '*wirtschaftsethik*' (economic ethics of religion) of six old

religions—Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism and considered the effects of each of them on the economic organization of life of people and, thereby, attempted to co-relate religion with economics.

Marx saw in the society of his times a means of understanding the nature of every society and of the whole history upto revolution which, according to him, would emancipate mankind. He applied the economic and materialistic factors to his study of all historical periods.

Weber, on the other hand, emphasised on the original factors of the society and, thereby, attempted to account for the historical uniqueness. He did not accept the Marxian claim of providing the total explanation of history in terms of economic phenomena and considered it only as a 'naive justification of metaphysical assumption without any scientific value.'

Besides, Weber did not believe that 'ideas rule the world.' He supported his contention by presenting the example of 'Protestantism' as a social fact which helped in understanding the role of ideas in history.

3 A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GANDHI & MARX

It is believed that every social thinker is judged on the basis of his considerations of the socio-economic, political and religious conditions prevailing before and during his life time and also by the ideas and concepts laid down by his fore-runners. Therefore, it has been our attempt to have an idea of conditions which prevailed in the complex society and served as food for Gandhian and Marxian social thinking. Needless to say that Marx and Gandhi, in their respective approaches to socialism, class conflict, class-consciousness, trusteeship and various other concepts, appear to be quite close to each other. Yet each of them retains his own uncompromising distinction.

Concept of Socialism

As regards the ideal of Socialism, the approaches of Karl Marx and M. K. Gandhi coincide with each other at several points but, at the same time, at certain stages there emerge glaring differences between the two. These differences we find when, for example, we consider the question of means and ends, centralisation or decentralisation of power, capitalistic system, class-struggle etc.

Nevertheless, it will not be out of place to mention that Socialism, like all 'isms' is interpreted in different ways by different people. It bears different meaning to different persons. The interpretations or meanings attached to, or derived from this term are subjected, on the one hand, to individuals' own perception and, on the other hand, to the geographical, socio-economic and cultural conditions.

No two interpretations being alike, the methods for the attainment of such interpretations also differ from country to country. The peculiar political, social and economic condi-

tions of a nation are responsible as to how its people conceive of the ideal of Socialism and the means to attain that ideal. So it is quite natural if we find some difference, even fundamental in the approaches of Marx and Gandhi.

In spite of some similarity between the Marxian and Gandhian views on Socialism, the violence as a means, advocated by the former, makes all difference. Marx treats men merely as means for achieving certain ends e. g. Socialism and he approves the use of violence for achieving them. But Gandhi does not approve violence. He says that violent revolutions can succeed only in that country in which government is disorganised.

The problem for Gandhi was as practical as it was for Marx. For both the criterion of truth lay in meeting human needs. Both Marx and Gandhi probed into the problem as participant observers and leaders of their respective movements. But the distinction emerges when we find that Marx accepted the philosophy of History which defined the content of those needs and indicated their satisfaction. Gandhi, on the other hand, perceived the necessity for developing an approach, a tool and a form, whereby the content, i. e. substantial human needs, could be met and the truth (the relative truth in terms of substantial human needs) of any situation could emerge. We find that Gandhi rejected also the Hegelian concept of reality and reason. He agreed with Feuerbach saying that 'man is the measure of reason.'

Dialectical Difference

The contrast between the Gandhian dialectics and that of Marx or his fore-runner, Hegel, is striking. Each deals with a different level of abstraction and by comparing them the dynamic quality of Satyagraha may be illuminated.

Sidney Hook, while analysing the criterion of dialectical thinking remarks, "Only when that whole or unit of continuity, which has been destroyed by the presence of conflicting factors, has been restored or re-established in another whole... can we claim validity of our procedure."²⁶

On this basis S. Hook defines the heart of Marxian dialectics in the following words :—

‘For Marx any material, which is the subject of man’s activity, generates its own normative ideals in relation to the way it succeeds in fulfilling human needs. From the reciprocal influence and interaction between the ideal and the actual a new subject matter is produced out of which in turn are born the means by which it will be changed.’

Marx was critical of the Hegalian dialectical method because it did not allow for the empirical approach. According to his interpretation, the dialectical process controls both the thought and the action. He retains the dialectics as a system of logic and applies to the human activity solely as an interpretation. The interaction is expressed in terms of social environment on the one hand and human needs on the other, and it results in the class-struggle. In other words, Marxian development of dialectic is directed to predetermine the content of both thesis and antithesis, creating the class-struggle, and anticipates a synthesis in the realization of a classless society. Here lies the end of Marxian dialectical process. The content of Marxian dialectics is supplied through the dogma of class-struggle. It is at this point, where Marx introduces the content, the Gandhian dialectics of Satyagraha strikingly departs. Marxian method thus loses its true dynamic and creative quality by getting entangled with historicism.

Gandhian dialectic, which is quite distinct from that of Marx describes a process resulting from the application of a technique of action to any situation of human conflict, a process essentially creative and inherently constructive.

Karl Popper, in his book, ‘The Open Society and its Enemies’, writes, ‘Marx is responsible for the devastating influences of the historical method of thought within ranks of those who wish to advance the cause of open society...Marxian is a purely historical theory, a theory which aims at predicting the future course of economics and power, of political developments and especially of revolutions.’^{2 7}

Gandhi agrees with Marx that beliefs can be tested through action alone. But he goes further to supply the empirical control which is sacrificed by the historicism of Marx. Marx introduces the subject and content, where he predetermines the structure and direction of conflict. But Gandhi has no such pre-determinations about structure or direction of conflict. He insists on process and the techniques only. For him techniques, such as 'Satyagraha,' only lead to solutions yet unknown.

It can, therefore, be inferred that Gandhian Satyagraha assumes the rationality of man—rationality in the sense that man is endowed with reason, that man can utilize reason to direct his actions and that a technique for conducting and resolving the conflict can appeal to the rationale in man.²⁸

Religion in Gandhian Socialism

Gandhi aims at the unity of religion and socialism. Socialism devoid of religion does not appeal to him at all. He says that in terms of religion there is no duality in Socialism. It is all unity. Looking at society all the world over, there is nothing but duality or plurality. Unity is conspicuous by its absence. 'This man is high, that man is low, that is a Hindu, that a Muslim, third a Christian, fourth a Parsi, fifth a Sikh, sixth a Jew. Even among these there are sub-divisions. In the unity of my conception, there is perfect unity in plurality of designs. Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such, you can add zeros to one and the first zero will account for ten and every addition will account for ten times the previous number.'

Gandhian concept of socialism imbibes a strong belief in God. Marxian socialism has no such belief. It precludes religion all together. In connection with the unity of religion and socialism, as advocated by Gandhi, two questions have been levelled :

1. Does it mean that no socialist believes in God? If there be any, why have they not made any visible progress?

2. Many Godly persons have lived before now, but why have they not succeeded in founding a socialistic state ?

Gandhi answers that it has perhaps never occurred to a believing socialist that there is any connection between his socialism and belief in God. It is equally safe to say that Godly-men, as a rule, never commended socialism to masses.

Gandhian socialism is also related with Satyagraha. Gandhi says that every worthy object can be achieved by the use of satyagraha, and emphasises that socialism can not be achieved by any other means.

As regards the birth of Socialism, Gandhi has his own views, different than those of Marx or other Western socialists. A writer has mentioned the similarity between the birth of democracy and socialism saying that 'when a few, who ought to hold the economic power in trust for the others from whom they derive it, use it for their own self aggrandizement and to the detriment of the rest, the inevitable result is the deprivation of the few of the means of economic power by many i.e. birth of socialism.' But Gandhi differs with this view and says that socialism was not born with the discovery of the misuse of capital by capitalists. According to Gandhi, socialism, even communism, originated from the opening verses of the 'Ishopanishad' :

ईशा वास्यमिदं यत् किञ्च जगत्याम् जगत् ।

यथा प्रकाश यत्येकः कृत्स्न लोके मियं रविः ।

तेन व्यक्तेन मंजीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम्

—Ishopanishad, 1.

This extract of 'Ishopanishad' explains that God, the Ruler provides all those in this universe. So, renounce and dedicate all to Him and then enjoy or use the portion that may fall in your lot. Never covet any body's possession.

This is, therefore, the root from where the socialism, according to Gandhi, was born. He further says that when some reforms lost faith in the method of conversion, the technique of what is known as 'scientific socialism' was born. Here Gandhi introduces his theory of Trusteeship.

No doubt, there prevails, almost at every step of Gandhian social thinking an overtone of religion but we also observe that Gandhi's concern for human needs lies at the core of his teachings and experiments.

Gandhi's Disagreement with Western Socialists

Gandhi disagrees with the socialists' belief that the centralization of the necessities of life will conduce to the common welfare when the centralized industries are planned and owned by the state.

Gandhi disagrees also with the environment of violence in which the conception of Western socialism takes birth. The motive lying behind the Western and Gandhian conception of socialism is, no doubt, the same—the greatest welfare of the whole society and the abolition of the hedious inequalities, resulting in the existence of millions of 'have-nots' and handful of 'haves.' The means to attain this end are, however, different. According to Gandhian belief this end can be achieved only with non-violence. He declares that 'coming into power of the Proletariat through violence is bound to fail in the end because what is gained by violence must be lost before superior violence.'

Emphasising his point of difference with the Socialists, Gandhi further says, 'Under my plan the state will be there to carry out the will of the people, not to dictate to them or force them to do its will. Whereas socialists and communists of the West say they can do nothing to bring about economic equality today. When they get control over the state, they will enforce equality.'

Marxian socialism and even communism of the West are based on certain conceptions which are fundamentally different from those of Gandhi. One of their conceptions is their belief in essential selfishness of human nature. But Gandhi does not agree with this conception and emphasises that essential difference between man and the brute is that former can respond to the call of spirit in him, can rise superior to the passions

that he owns in common with the brute and, therefore, can be superior to selfishness and violence. This is the fundamental concept of Hinduism and it is advocated in Gandhian Socialism.

With this conception in mind, Gandhi declares, 'Our socialism and communism should, therefore, be based on non-violence and harmonious co-operation of labour and capital, landlord and tenant.'

Constructive Programme of Gandhi

Therefore, for the acquisition of the power of non-violent resistance, Gandhi advocates the only way of honest working for the 'Constructive Programme.' Gandhi's 'Constructive Programme' for an ideal non-violent state consisted of the following items :

1. Communal unity, 2. Removal of untouchability,
3. Prohibition, 4. Use of Khadi, 5. Other village industries,
6. Village sanitation, 7. Basic education, 8. Adult education,
9. Uplift of women and their education, 10. Education in health and hygiene, 11. Development of provincial languages,
12. National language, 13. Economic equality. 14. Prosperity of peasants—'kisans,' 15. Labour, 16. Conditions of Adivasis, 17. Lepers' condition, and 18. Care of students.

Element of Sacrifice

The element of sacrifice bears a common feature in the approaches of both, Gandhi and Marx. In Marxian Socialism, the element of sacrifice emerges with the violent conflict between capitalists and the working class. This conflict calls for a violent revolution wherein the highest sacrifice i.e. sacrifice of life itself, is *demanded*.

Sacrifice in Gandhian non-violent technique requires the same preparation, as does violent conflict, for *offering* the highest sacrifice of life itself as a possible outcome of using the technique. A Satyagrahi of Gandhian thought will stick to his own position so long as he holds it to be true. That determination may lead him to extreme endurance and even to death.

Marx was, however, opposed to this type of sacrifice yet he called for sacrifice in the circumstances of class-struggle. He calls for sacrifice of the individual life to the irrevocable march of history towards predetermined goals.

4. Conclusion

The comparative study of Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi, brings us now in a position to evaluate their social thinking and give a conclusive opinion about both.

1. Both Gandhi and Marx conceived Socialism on their own respective social, economic and political background. Marx came forward with 'Socialism' as a solution to the problems confronting the European society of his time and, with Engel's assistance, laid down a comprehensive programme in the form of 'Communist Manifesto', which served as a preparatory ground for radical revolution and food for a theory, later developed by Fascists. Gandhi, on the other hand, advocated 'Socialism' of his own conception as a dynamic means to attain an end i. e. welfare of human society and ultimately laid down a 'Constructive Programme' for attaining his ideal of the socialistic pattern of non-violent society.

2. Marx believed in the potentialities of forces of production whereas Gandhi believed more in the potentialities of man's nature and aimed at 'perfectibility' of human behaviour in particular and society in general.

3. As we have already attempted to examine the sociological implications of Marxian theory of 'economic determinism,' we can obviously assert that his theory can be better explained in terms of social conditions, which are no less important in governing the economic conditions. From such an angle of social determinism, Karl Marx can very well be treated, rather claimed, as sociological thinker. Gandhi, on the other hand, is better claimed by many as a social philosopher because his social and political thinking is underlined by spiritual unity with a religious background. Religion of Gandhi is, however, universal and his spiritual unity comprises of truth, non-violence and belief in God. In any case, it will be a mistake on the part of those who, due to their inadequate understanding,

rush to dismiss his importance by merely calling him a 'Saint' or a 'religious preacher.' The efficacy and significance of Gandhian social thinking can be well imagined only if one has understood his tools of truth and non-violence along with the action technique of Satyagraha.

4. Access to the heart of the problem of social and political conflict is denied by the historicism of Marx. Marxian empirical approach is impregnated with the dogma of class-struggle and the absolutism of his philosophy of history which strangles the development of dialectics on the level where it could enter into a technique of action. Gandhi, on the other hand, with his dialectical approach provides a dynamic control in the field of action through the fashioning of techniques for the creative resolution of conflict. Gandhian dialectics, which is thus quite distinct from that of Marx, describes a process resulting from the application of a superior technique of action to any situation of human conflict—a process essentially creative and inherently constructive.²⁹

5. Marxian thinking starts from his belief on productive forces as lever of social change. Economic conditions of human life are the basic foundation on which Marx develops his entire theory. Gandhian philosophy starts from his belief in 'Satya.' The principle of 'Satya' is identified by Gandhi with God, soul force, moral law etc., which holds the universe. As Dr. Dhawan has pointed out, it is the principle of spiritual unity around which the entire philosophy of Gandhi clusters. 'Satya' being at the root, the unity of all life consists in serving and loving all with a view of 'greatest good of all.' This 'Satya' or spiritual unity can be realised by non-violence. To achieve this greatest good, Gandhi emphasises that means should be as pure as ends. For cultivating non-violence Gandhi introduces a code of discipline—'Bramhacharya.' A nonviolent or constructive 'Satyagrahi' must acquire 'Bramhacharya' i. e. control on thoughts, words and deeds, over all the senses.

Gandhian social ideal lies in stateless and casteless society. But as 'ideal' can never be realised, he retains the State in the

second best society as a concession to human perfection. Decentralisation of political and economic powers, reduction in functions and importance of State, growth of voluntary associations, removal of dehumanizing poverty and superficiality, the new education and tradition of non-violent resistance to injustice—all these, according to Gandhi, will bring life within the understanding of man and make society and State democratic. Over and above, Gandhi never fails to remind us again and again that his philosophy has no finality. Its dynamic quality is aimed at searching for and experimenting with the truth.

6. Gandhi was a true Indian nationalist. There was no room for race-hatred in his concept of nationalism. Every thing of India attracted him. India, according to Gandhi, has every thing that a human being, within the highest possible aspirations, can want. To him, India appeared to be 'Karma-bhumi' (land of duty) in contradiction of 'Bhogbhumi' (land of enjoyment).

7. Gandhi's patriotism was subservient to his religion, religion which had no geographical limitations. His life was dedicated to service of India through religion of non-violence. The force of spiritual unity, derived from religious and cultural heritage of India, was so miraculous on Gandhi that he said, 'I cling to India like a child to its mother's breast, because I feel that she gives me spiritual nourishment I need. She has the environment that responds to my highest aspiration. When that faith is gone, I shall feel like an orphan without hope of ever finding a guardian.'³⁰

8. Therefore, according to Gandhi, India, with non-violence as her creed and 'Satyagraha' as a technique of action, is fitted for religious supremacy of the world. In regard to the National Government, Gandhi was all out adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible because that, he thought, will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order.

9. Ambition of Gandhi was much higher than his desire for Indian independence. Through the deliverance of India, he sought to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of the Western exploitation.

10. In so far as survival and progress of mankind depends on non-violence, which, according to Gandhi, is the law of life, Gandhi, as the most authoritative exponent of non-violence in contemporary world, has made an invaluable contribution to social and political thought.³¹

To express in Gandhi's own words, 'Ahimsa is one of the world's greatest principles which no power on earth can wipe out. Thousands like me may die to vindicate the ideal but Ahimsa will never die ; and gospel of Ahimsa can be spread only through believers dying for the cause.'

'If India makes violence her creed, and I have survived, I would not care to live in India.'³² Such was the determination of Gandhi and he maintained it upto the last. Ultimately he met his irony of fate on Jan. 30, 1948. Gandhi, the Indian patriot and the exponent of non-violence, fell fatal victim of violence and became Indian martyr.

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